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United States Senate

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February 1, 1990

SSCI #90-406-A

The Honorable William H. Webster
Director of Central Intelligence
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Judge Webster:

I have been asked by Senator Gore, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Science, Technology, and Space of the Senate Committee on Commerce, to solicit your assistance on a project he has undertaken.

Senator Gore is conducting a thorough review of the possible role and utility of prior, existing, and planned earth observation satellites and other sensors in a comprehensive global change research program. Specifically, he is attempting to determine what sensors are now in place, or planned, and what data are, or will be, available that could provide insights and information of value to a wide range of scientific inquiries. He has asked for our assistance in gathering the same types of information for classified programs in the Department of Defense and the Intelligence Community.

I have attached a copy of Senator Gore's letter for your reference. Since Senator Gore anticipates using the results of this research in upcoming budget authorization hearings, I hope that you will be able to quickly lend your assistance and task the appropriate elements of the Intelligence Community. Senator Gore and his staff understand the security implications and responsibilities associated with this request. I have asked Mr. Keith Hall to serve as the liaison between them and the Community. I have also forwarded this same request to Mr. Martin Faga, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Space).

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,


David L. Boren
Chairman



Attachment

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 12, 1990

Senator David L. Boren
Chairman
Select Committee on Intelligence
SH 211
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

One of the key issues that will face the Second Session of the 101st Congress will be global change. In particular, the Congress will be required to review the Administration's proposed U.S. Global Change Research Program including the NASA Mission to Planet Earth -- a complex space-based earth observation system.

In preparation for this, I have instituted a series of roundtable discussion with leading members of the science community to try and determine what scientific questions need answers to assist policy makers in formulating prudent rules, regulations and protocols and what assets are already available or planned that would expedite this process and reduce its costs. Our review has lead us to the point where we are trying to determine what space-based earth observation sensors are now in place and what data is already available that could provide insights and information of value to a wide range of scientific inquiries.

On the civil side, I have initiated a thorough review of prior, existing and planned earth observations satellites and in situ programs to try and determine what resources are already available and how they could be utilized in a comprehensive global change research program. However, I have little information available about Department of Defense and intelligence gathering systems -- both space-based and aircraft sensors -- whose data could be used to provide information to the science community that would help answer the key scientific inquiries concerning global change. Your help in this area would be greatly appreciated.

In particular, I would like to know if you would be willing to ask the Director of Central Intelligence to develop a catalog of previous, existing, and planned satellite systems and aircraft sensors that would be useful to the U.S. Global Change Research Program. I would like to know if there are systems that could provide data concerning land surface properties (snow cover, ice-sheet volume, index of vegetation cover, soil moisture), ocean variables (sea surface

temperature, sea ice type and motion, sea level data, ocean carbon dioxide, ocean chlorophyll and circulation patterns) geophysical variables (plate motions) climate and atmospheric variables (concentrations of important trace species, cloud amounts, types and heights, precipitation, tropical winds) etc.

I also would like to know what processing technologies are available for such large volumes of data. This information also would be useful to the U.S. Global Change Research Initiative.

At present, the Department of Defense is a participant in the U.S. Global Change Research Program's Committee on Earth Sciences so I would hope that some of this information is already being gathered. But I would be grateful if you could initiate this request and if this information could be gathered as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Al Gore', is written over the typed name.

AL GORE